

Exam Season Begins

I explained last week that we are now starting the main exam season and most of the messages to share with you this week concern exams and revision. I do wish all of our students the very best for the next few weeks and urge them to do their best both in the exam room and in revision before the day. Previous newsletters have given details of revision sessions that are available to students and these are continuing.

Year 11 Maths Revision Day

On Wednesday we had a revision day for some of our Maths GCSE candidates. The day was led by three Advances Skills Maths Teachers from other schools who each ran an activity aimed at reinforcing knowledge that is needed for the forthcoming exams. In the afternoon a Maths competition was held in the Atrium in an atmosphere of great excitement. The students were very grateful for the guests' hard work and said that they really found the day beneficial. The guests in their turn said that they were very impressed with our students and that they are a credit to the school. By working to a different timetable for the day, having refreshment breaks and a shared lunch, the students all found that a whole day of Maths can be much more beneficial than it might sound.

While all of this was happening Dr Chris Saker, from the Further Maths Centre at Essex University, spent the day with our top set mathematicians showing them some advanced Maths work including the mathematics of juggling. This day stretched the students and involved some techniques that are only studied at A level or degree level, but also included some information and advice about careers for Maths graduates. We hope to now establish links with the Further Maths Centre at Cambridge University for our current Year 10 students.

A very big thank you to all the staff and guests who were involved in these activities.

Year 9 Exams

This week we have had SATs for English, Maths and Science. Although these national tests are no longer compulsory, we believe that they provide useful feedback about the students' progress and excellent exam experience for the students. On this last point I am delighted to again report that the students behaved extremely well and handled the whole process very well indeed. We will arrange to send the results home next half term.

External Examinations

As we start the main examination season I would like to clarify a few points for parents and students.

All of the GCSE, A level and BTEC examinations are operated by national exam boards (OCR, Edexcel, AQA) and the school is a registered Centre for these. Although the students take these exams at the school, they must be conducted according to the exam boards' own rules and regulations and they will send out inspectors to check that this is done correctly. We do not have the option to vary these rules and I want to make this clear to both parents and students. So the need for clear pencil cases, school uniform, starting on time and many other issues are all compulsory. In particular, the rule that mobile phones must not be brought into the examination room even if turned off needs to be strictly enforced.

Obviously, it is necessary to be present for the exam in order to pass it. If a student is unwell and unable to sit the exam it is essential that the student sees a doctor and obtains a note to certify that they are not well enough to take the exam. The school then has to forward this note to the relevant examination board. If only one of the papers for a subject is missed the board will usually still award a grade based on the other paper(s) and coursework, but if both papers are missed they will not do this.

The school pays for the fees for the examination entries which is approximately £20 per subject per student. If a student fails to attend an exam without a doctor's note we are likely to bill the parents for the cost of that subject's exam entry.

Finally, it is the student's responsibility to arrive on time for examinations. They are all issued with personal timetables which need to be carefully checked and looked after. If there are any questions about exam entries or times and dates students should speak to the school Examination Secretary, Mrs Healey, as soon as possible.

Year 10 Exam Reminder

A reminder that the Year 10 RE Religion and Life exam will take place on Tuesday 12 May. Students will have a revision session during period 2 and an early lunch at 12.45 prior to the exam at 1.15. Year 11 students who are retaking the Religion and Life paper will also have an early lunch at 12.45.

Sean Hayes

GCSE RE Examination – Tuesday 12th May

A reminder to all year 10 students and those in year 11 re-taking the 'Religion and Life' GCSE RE paper. The exam is on Tuesday afternoon and will start at 1.15. You will have an early lunch at 12.45 and then make your way to the Sports Hall for 1.15. The exam is 2 hours long. Please remember to bring pens with you.

The five sections on the exam paper are:

1. Believing in God
2. Matters of life and death
3. Marriage and the family
4. Social Harmony
5. Wealth and poverty

Relationship Education

On Tuesday of this week the 'Ten Ten' theatre company came into school to work with year 10 and to perform their production of 'Babies.' This was an outstanding workshop which explored the need for good, positive communication and other issues concerning relationships. The theatre company specialises in tailor made workshops specifically designed to complement the catholic Ethos of our school. The theatre company were very positive about the conduct of our students and said they were the best behaved students they had ever had.

Spiritual life

A reminder that Sister Cinzia is in school on Wednesdays and Fridays and is available in the chapel at lunchtimes on these days. Our assemblies this week have been about what it means to 'belong'. The theme of Belonging is also currently the SEAL focus for this week with years 7 and 8. Our theme next week is 'In my Shoes' and explores the skill of Empathy.

Parent Champion

In his role as Parent Champion, Father David will be available to see parents on **Thursday 14th May at 3.30pm.**

Father David may be contacted by phoning him direct on 01733-562528 ext 5, or emailed at frdavidallsouls@hotmail.com

Medical News

Yesterday we had the final round of inoculations against cervical cancer and again the nursing staff said they were impressed with the behaviour and attitude of the students, which is very good to hear. This national campaign will move up a gear next year when it is expanded to girls in other year groups.

This coming week some Year 7 students will have a dental check-up as part of a survey of dental health among children.

Congratulations

...to Ellie Savill of Year 11 who passed her Grade 1 Flute exam with merit.

Boys Outdoor Cricket

The outdoor cricket leagues have now started for both the Under 13 and Under 15 teams. The Under 15s have lost both of their opening games against Orton Longueville and Hampton. The Under 13s lost their first game against Hampton despite scoring 80 runs from their 16 overs.

Athletics

The first athletics meeting of the year took place at the embankment last Tuesday. There were some excellent individual performances particularly from Lisa-Marie Jones, Judd Delgado and Harriet Ayling. City Athletics Trials take place next Tuesday at the embankment where we are hoping for more success on the track.

Attendance Update

Percentage attendance up to the end of last week was:

Year 7:	91%	Year 10:	84%
Year 8:	92%	Year 11:	89%
Year 9:	92%	Years 7-11:	89%

We continue to work with the attendance team from the Local Authority to ensure that our students attend at least 90% of school days and preferably at least 92%. Individual figures are reported in the student Updates and we contact parents when attendance falls below these levels. Please remember that family holidays should be taken outside term time. If parents need to take their children out of school during term time they must apply to the school for permission and do so at least four weeks in advance.
